

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 1808.

Miscellany.

AMERICAN HEMP.

THE secretary of the navy will receive, until the 1st of November next, proposals for furnishing water rotted Hemp of the growth of the United States, to be delivered either at Portsmouth, (N. H.) Boston, New-London, New-York, Philadelphia, New-Castle, Baltimore, Norfolk, Wilmington, (N. C.) Charleston, (S. C.) Savanna, (Georg.) or New-Orleans.

For well water rotted and well cleaned American Hemp, the secretary of the navy is disposed to allow a liberal price beyond the usual price of such hemp when dew rotted.

Any person transmitting proposals for furnishing a supply of water rotted Hemp, will be pleased to state the price per ton, the place where, and the time when, it would be delivered.

PREPARATION OF FLAX.

A republication of the following at the present time may not prove unacceptable.]

Cooper's Point, 1st Sept. 1805.

RESPECTED FRIEND,

FLAX being the principal article of domestic manufacture (wool excepted,) in the middle and northern States, perhaps a hint respecting its preparation may be acceptable.

About 18 years past, I purchased a German servant man, who by his account came from the neighbourhood of Russia. I soon after set him and others to spread my flax; the lot not containing the whole, he requested me to let him rot the remainder in his own way, which he said was to half rot it in the water and then on the ground, which he did, and the flax so rotted proved the best, softest and whitest, I had ever seen; and the method pleased my wife and pinners so well that I have practised it ever since with some alterations as to time.

The process we find to answer best, is, after the flax is beaten off, bind it about the size of common sheaves, and about the last of September, or first of October, immerse it in water; stagnation is preferable to running; it should not be more than two feet deep from the surface, and the flax kept entirely under water about two weeks; but the time should be regulated by the weather, as to heat or cold. We then take it out and spread it, thin and even, and when it is as occasion may require: after being spread, very rain, fog, dew, or frost, assists in separating the gum, whitening the flax, and extracting the gum, which is the only coarse and harsh, and it is an established fact with those who have tried, that either flax or cloth made from flax prepared in the above manner, is softer and will whiten in one third of the time that is requisite for that from flax rotted in the common manner.

I believe the principal reason that water-rotting flax is so little practised in North-America, is that those who have tried it find the flax hard and brittle, the cause of which, (I imagine) is putting it in water in hot weather, when two or three days will not extract the gum.

A person of my acquaintance from Hibernia, who is well acquainted with the process of flax preparation informs me, that it has been the common practice in Ireland, for about 20 or 30 years, to let the flax remain in the water until sufficiently rotted, and that the people in general, finding it did not answer their sanguine expectation, have since adopted the above method with success.

Linen made of flax prepared as above directed, with one boil, will be about the colour of Russia sheeting, which induces me to believe that all the hemp and flax in Russia is rotted in the same way. And, as I am greatly desirous for the improvement of the manufactures of our country, I wish my fellow-citizens to make a trial, which may be safely done by trying a small part.

If you think the foregoing worth a place in your paper, it will be well to publish it soon, as the season proper for the operation is near at hand.

I remain your friend,

JOSEPH COOPER.

James J. Wilson, Esq.

SPIRIT OF THE TIMES.

A COMPANY is about to be established in Petersburg (Vir.) with a capital of 50,000 dollars, for the carding and spinning of cotton and wool, fulling, weaving of cotton shirtings, cambricks, dimities, shirtings, nankeens, kerseymeres, velvets, velveteens, ribbons, cords, duroys, grandourells, tickings, hosiery and all other articles of cotton and wool. And also the manufacture of iron ware, such as nails, hoes, axes, scythes, &c. &c. Or such of the said enumerated articles and manufactures as the society shall from time to time find to be the most productive, and the calls for consumption may demand.

From the National Intelligencer.

ON Saturday the 30th ult. the ANNUAL SHEEP SHEARING, instituted by George Washington Parke Custis, Esq; was held at his seat at Arlington. About forty gentlemen of the neighbouring country were present. It was cause of infinite gratification, to see this patriotic and praiseworthy establishment, so numerous and respectably attended, and already exhibiting such strong evidence of the utility contemplated by its worthy founder.

The premiums of the present year were for the finest year old ram-lamb, and for the best specimen of ten yards of home-spun cotton cloth.

Four gentlemen of the best estates in this part of the country, major Lawrence Lewis, of Wood-Lawn, John Tayloe, Esq; of Mount Airy, Hayward Foote, Esq; of Hayfield, and William Alexander, Esq; of Preston, contended as breeders of that invaluable animal, the sheep, and each by his personal attendance and evident anxiety, to gain the palm, at the same time that he furnished the most laudable example, exhibited the strongest imaginable proof of the advantages of stimuli like the present, to bring into action the exertions of the wealthy, and of the reflecting part of society, to develop the latent resources of the country, for the great benefit of the community at large.

The four lambs shewn by those highly respectable gentlemen farmers, were animals uncommon indeed in Virginia and Maryland, and would do credit to any country, as well for size and form as for the weight and quality of the fleece. The visitors selected from their own number, as judges of the day, Thomas Digges, Esq; of Warburton, General John Mason, of Annapolis Island, William Lee, Esq; of Burgandy farm, and Jonathan Swift, Esq; of Alexandria. Col. Deneale was appointed judge of the weights. They adjudged to John Tayloe, Esq; for his lamb, as combining most of the desirable qualities, the Prize Cup. Mrs D-nnison, Mrs. Ball, and Miss Peggy Fields, all of Fairfax county, Virginia, produced each a piece of cotton cloth, of their own home manufacture, and delightful specimens of the ingenuity, industry, and good house-wifery of our country they were, all having been spun and woven in their respective houses, amidst the ordinary avocations of the family—the gallant judges placed the golden apple in the fair hands of Miss Fields. General Mason exhibited a handsome specimen of domestic flaxen cloth, and some very fine spun cotton—both highly admired and applauded. Dr. Dick, Thomas Peter, Esq; and several other gentlemen exhibited samples of wool.

Beside the pleasure derived from the competition just described, the visitors were highly gratified by the exhibition of Mr. Custis's own stock, and in witnessing the success of his crossing and improving the different breeds of sheep, collected with much care and judgment by him—the Mount Vernon Persian flock, the Smith's Island, the Arlington long woolled, the Merino, and several relative crosses were successively shewn, and examined with much approbation.

In the afternoon the company partook of the hospitality of the proprietor, in a most abundant and elegant dinner, served on the lawn under a spacious marquee. After dinner Mr. Custis addressed the company, and congratulated them on the already promising state of the institution—he explained the motives by which he had been induced to set it on foot; he depicted, in a concise and very perspicuous manner, the advantages which would certainly arise from fostering manufactures of all kinds, but in this part of the country particularly from encouraging the raising of wool, and the making of home-spun cloth; he took an extensive and extremely interesting view, of the present situation of the United States as related to foreign nations, and pointed out in the most forcible manner, the necessity of rendering ourselves independent of them, by furnishing our own supplies of manufactured articles. He adverted in a reserved and highly decorous manner, to his own efforts on these subjects; declared his conviction of the duty which every member of society owes to the community to contribute by individual exertion, and by example, to the bettering the condition of his fellow-men, and to introduce and encourage such improvements as are calculated to produce so desirable an end. He disclaimed every thing like personal emolument, from the establishment; asked the aid of the gentlemen present, and of the neighbouring country, to carry into execution by degrees, his system—calculated for the good of the community, not of himself. He stated that he should in a short time publish a prospectus of the whole, containing some valuable additions to the present plan, and concluded by soliciting the annual attendance of the gentlemen present, and their friends.

The address was received with great satisfaction and applause. Mr. Digges, as soon as it was closed, gave "The Arlington sheep shearing—many prosperous returns of the day."

Mr. Custis, after a few prefatory and feeling remarks, in which he took occasion, in a very appropriate manner, to introduce the tent under which his guests were then seated, and which in former days, had oft proudly covered his illustrious relative in the field of privation, of toil and of danger, amidst a general emotion excited in the breasts of the whole company (most of whom had been the neighbours and personal friends of that great and good man) by the recollection of past times, gave the "memory of General Washington." General Mason moved that on the next and each succeeding meeting at the Arlington sheep shearing, the visitors should appear clad in American manufacture—the motion was warmly applauded, and immediately and unanimously adopted.

April 30th, 1808.

THE subscribers appointed by the gentlemen visitors present, to adjudge the premiums offered by the proprietor, George Washington Parke Custis, Esq;—for the finest year old lamb, and for the best specimen of home-spun cloth, proceeded to examine three pieces of cotton cloth; one produced by Mrs. Dennison, of Fairfax county, Virginia, dark mixture, full yard wide, very fine and remarkable handsome. One by Mrs. Ball, of same county, chequered, of firm and excellent texture, yard wide and of neat pattern. And the third by Miss Peggy Fields, of the same county, white, of exceeding fine thread, pattern Marcellles, of small figure, very soft, even and extremely beautiful, 7/8 yard wide.

Four gentlemen offered lambs and entered into competition for the prize.

Lawrence Lewis, Esq; of Wood-Lawn, Virginia, exhibited a lamb called Dribbley, his size was of the Arlington long woolled race, bred by Mr. Custis—He weighed on the hoof 140 lbs. fleece 6 1/2 lbs.

Hayward Foote, Esq; of Hayfield, Virginia, shewed a lamb called Badger—of same breed and age, weighed on the hoof unshorn, 105 lbs. fleece 9 1/2 lbs.

John Tayloe, Esq; of Mount Airy, Virginia, shewed a lamb called Superb, his dam a ewe of col. Dorsey's flock, (well known) by a ram of Mr. Tayloe's own breed, his weight on the hoof unshorn 180 lbs. fleece 8 1/2 lbs.—height 2 feet 8 1/2 inches—length from tip of the nose to the end of the tail 5 feet 10 1/2 inches.

William Alexander, Esq; of Preston, Virginia, shewed a lamb called Preston, of the home breed—weight on the hoof unshorn 149 lbs. fleece 7 1/2 lbs.—height 2 feet 5 1/2 inches—length from tip of the nose to the end of the tail 5 feet 10 1/2 inches.

In the opinion of the judges, the wool of Mr. Foote's lamb was of the longest staple—it measured full 12 inches—that of Mr. Tayloe's lamb was of the finest fibre; that of the lambs of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Alexander was inferior somewhat in fibre to Mr. Tayloe's, and in length of staple to Mr. Foote's.

Taking into consideration the great weight and size of Mr. Tayloe's lamb, and the fineness of the wool, although the fleece was not so heavy as one of the others, the judges unanimously declare the premium to be his.

And they adjudge to Miss Polly Fields the prize for the best specimen of cloth. They do this with more pleasure, as this beautiful specimen of cloth was spun and woven by Miss Fields herself.

THOMAS DIGGES,
J. MASON,
WILLIAM LEE,
JONATHAN SWIFT.

Communicated for the Maryland Gazette.

Arlington Sheep-Shearing, April 30th, 1808.

A SILVER CUP, given by G. W. Custis, Esq; for the best yearling lamb.

The prize was won by John Tayloe, Esquire, of Mount Airy,—whose lamb weighed, before shearing, 180 lbs.—fleece 8 1/2 lbs.—length from the nose to the end of the tail 5 feet 8 1/2 inches—height 2 feet 8 1/2 inches.

He was a remarkably well bodied sheep, having not an objectionable point; his dam of Dorsey's flock, and his sire one of Mr. Tayloe's own stock rams.

NOTE.

The judges were gen. J. Mason, T. Digges, W. Lee, and J. Swift. I think Mr. Tayloe's a larger lamb than I ever saw in England, or elsewhere.—The wool of all the lambs shewn fully equal in staple to that used in the cloathing counties of England, Somerset, Gloucester and Yorkshire. And the wool from Mr. Custis's improved Marinos, out of the Mount Vernon flock, as well as his Smith's Island breed, of finer texture and staple than any in Great-Britain, save those small Shetlands, so carefully obtained by sir John Sinclair.

THOS. DIGGES.

SCRAP.

THOSE who wish to shine by the singularity of their observations, rarely make any that are useful.